



March 15, 2013

U.S. Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20530-0001

Dear Attorney General Holder,

I am the Chairman of the committee in the Washington State legislature with oversight of the implementation of I-502, Washington's attempt at replacing the illegal marijuana market with a carefully controlled and heavily taxed recreational system.

As there is no existing regulatory scheme to use as a pattern, it is important that we get this right. I myself spent 14 years as a narcotics detective and for a number of years worked on a federal drug task force. I am intimately familiar with the intricacies and dangers of the illicit market. One of my goals is to assure that we do not legitimize or grant any type of amnesty to those who have worked within criminal enterprises that produced, processed, or trafficked marijuana in the past.

My concern extends to making sure that this new market is not capitalized with profits from ill-gotten gains. I also believe that accessibility to the legitimate market will be another key component in extinguishing the criminal enterprises that exist today. By the beginning of next year only those operating with a valid state issued certificate will be operating legally within Washington State. Those without a certificate will continue to be operating in violation of the Uniform Controlled Substance Act, which the state will vigorously enforce. I have proposed legislation that we will be hearing next Tuesday to address some of these issues as an amendment to I-502.

All of this is a work in progress and we eagerly await any direction or assistance that the federal government might provide to the legislature in crafting a system that is acceptable to the Department of Justice and our fellow citizens across the country. If Washington's attempt at replacing the criminal market with a carefully controlled and regulated legitimate market is to be successful a close partnership to enforce state and federal drug laws against those remaining entities who operate outside of the law will be necessary.



I would like to offer an invitation to you or your representative to attend next Tuesday's hearing at 1:30 pm in House Hearing Room C in Olympia, Washington. As Chairman of the committee, I would also be happy to accept direction, concerns, or ideas at any time from our friends in the Department of Justice as we endeavor to, with great caution and diligence, enact the will of Washington State voters.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Chris Hurst", with a large, stylized flourish extending from the end of the signature.

Christopher Hurst, State Representative

31st Legislative District

Chairman, Government Accountability and Oversight Committee